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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents a collection of 38 poems and stories written by Arizona students in grades 7-12, who were finalists and winners in the 1993 annual Statehood Day Creative Writing Contest. (SR)

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1993

ARIZONA

STATEHOOD DAY

CREATIVE

WRITING

CONTEST

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C. Diane Bishop, Superintendent
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February 1993

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1993

ARIZONA

STATEHOOD DAY

CREATIVE

WRITING

CONTEST

Arizona Department of Education

C. Diane Bishop, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Muriel Rosmann, Writing/Language Arts Specialist

FEBRUARY 15, 1993

Representative "Polly" Rosenbaum

1993 Statehood Day Reflections

The celebration of Statehood Day, through special ceremonies by the Arizona House of Representatives, has been a long-standing tradition. Representative Rosenbaum has orchestrated these ceremonies over the years and as a former teacher she has chosen this time to honor outstanding students in Arizona's schools.

The 1993 Statehood Day Creative Writing Contest was jointly sponsored by the Arizona House of Representatives and the Arizona Department of Education. This year students in grades 7 - 12 submitted over 800 entries discussing "Arizona Treasures." In a blind judging process, twelve winners and twenty seven finalists were chosen. These students represented schools from around the state. The winners, their families and teachers were honored guests of the Arizona House of Representatives for the 1993 Statehood Day Ceremonies on February 15, 1993. The finalists received a certificate and letter of congratulations for their excellent writing.

A special thanks to Representative Polly Rosenbaum for her continuing dream that the greatest resource of Arizona is its young people as they learn and grow. Arizona educators, parents and students say a special "thank you" to Representative Rosenbaum for her many years of hard work and dedication in support of education.

Muriel Rosmann
Writing/Language Arts Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

1993 STATEHOOD DAY JUDGES

Representative Polly Rosenbaum	House of Representatives
Representative Robert J. McLendon	House of Representatives
Representative Tom Smith	House of Representatives
Muriel Rosmann	Arizona Department of Education
Frank Klajda	Arizona Department of Education
Mary Luckenbill	Deer Valley High School
Ken Reid	Mountain Pointe High School
Laurel Williams	Tolleson Union High School
Jim Driscoll	Vail Middle School
Corinne K. Haynes	Desert Sky Middle School
Carol Cann	Desert Sky Middle School
Ann Haltunnen	La Cima Middle School
Scott Reff	Amphitheater Middle School
Janet Conn	Kingman Jr. High School
Tom Helms	Cortez High School
Terri Fields	Sunnyslope High School
Marsha Ridings	Kyrene Middle School
Floria A. Shaw	Maxine O. Bush School
Joseph Lee	Pierson Middle School

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Winner

Grandparents

G randparents
R emember
A ncient days when our people went on the long walk,
N ature kept them alive and strong.
D amage was done to their land, but they endured.
P eople's crops and livestock were destroyed.
A ble to survive, they
R eturn to their homeland.
E ach day they looked into the future with hope.
N ever giving up they
T aught the younger generation to be
S trong and resilient to cope
with hardship.

Maretta Begay
Piñon Middle School
Piñon Unified School District No. 4
Ms. Carmelita Chee
7th Grade

Winner

WE ARE ONE

We hike through scorched hot deserts and cool snow topped
mountains,
We live in busy cities and small sleepy towns,
We view with wonder the golden sunset casting its red beams of
fire across the land,
We marvel at the paradox of dry sharp cacti and lush trees growing
together,
We feel the cold at the canyon's rim and the warmth that envelops
us in its bosom,
We, in this land of contrasts, are all races, all religions,
all creeds, all nationalities,
We have seen ourselves struggle to embody racial justice,
We have met the challenge.
We are Arizonans.

David Kamin
Madison Meadows
Madison School District
Mrs. Linda Besnette
7th Grade

Winner

Arizona Anthem

Vermont is known for its syrup.
Wisconsin is known for its cheese.
Hawaii is known for pineapple,
And Maine for its autumn leaves.

In Oregon it rains buckets.
In New Mexico it is dry.
Alaskans shiver with the cold,
and Colorado is too high.

California has frequent earthquakes,
Florida, hurricanes galore.
New York has water pollution,
And Iowa is a bore.

Some states are proud of their cattle.
Idaho is proud of its spuds.
But compared to the treasures of my state,
The other forty-nine are duds!

Arizona has acres of cotton,
Copper and silver as well.
Tons of citrus and melons,
More than the tongue can tell.

Forests for hunting and camping,
Streams for fishing too.
Lakes and mountains for skiers,
And the Grand Canyon for unequaled view.

Sunsets like no other.
The deserts are first rate!
And, wildlife is abundant
In Arizona, the sunshine state.

But better than citrus and canyons,
Of more value than forests and streams.
The finest treasure in Arizona
Is a people with hopes and dreams.

A people with such richness of culture,
Working to build their state,
Will insure Arizona's future
As the greatest of the great!

Jeff Fletcher
Kino Jr. High School
Mesa Unified School District
Ms. Lynn E. McQueen
7th Grade

Winner

Arizona's Success Story

The rising sun sends a yellowish-pink glow over the desert. For it is morning and prowling nocturnal creatures scurry to find shelter from the scorching heat. The sun is Mother Nature's alarm clock which never fails and is always punctual. All of her creations respond to this diurnal signal.

I, too, awake and begin a new day. This day is added to the many years I have lived in the mountain foothills of the Sonoran Desert. My scarred body discloses my ancient age and the hardships I have endured. Through these years, I have witnessed much of Arizona's history. I tower fifty feet and dwarf everything around me. I'm the great sentry that guards the rocky mountains which loom brown on the horizon.

I can feel my shallow roots craving the hard-packed sand's sparse food. I must soak up all the nutrients for the day, before they are evaporated by the big ball of flames. As these nutrients are scarce, I must use them thriftily so I can thrive. Water is almost extinct in my parched soil for it hasn't rained for many months. We saguaros are one of nature's great success stories because we survive through these harsh conditions.

Brenda Whitlock
Kyrene Middle School
Kyrene School District No. 28
Ms. Donna Gallaher
8th Grade

The pleated surface of my bark is like an accordion. It is tightly folded for my storage of water is low. However, I know I can survive, but I am weak and tired. Already there is a part of me which has died and is a dwelling place for cactus wrens and other birds.

These birds depend on me for shelter and food for their families. I can feel the three young cactus wrens nestled inside my trunk. I cannot locate their parents; they must be off in search of food. These fledglings have grown a thick layer of feathers which tickle my insides and send shivers down my spines.

Rat-a-tat-tat, I hear a gila woodpecker pecking at my tough skin to make its home. The cactus wrens will soon have new neighbors in this high rise apartment. The gila woodpecker will soon be done with his fist-sized hole. I feel my sap oozing out to seal my wound which will shortly be inhabited. I welcome this woodpecker for it eats my enemy, the cactus beetle, who brings disease.

I feel the tiny wrens preparing for night fall and so must I. I sense the sun's rays getting milder. Arizona's signature sunset is painted by the sun's colors smearing together when it is time to retire. These colors are spreading and mixing with the blue sky while darkness slowly conquers.

When the sun completes its daily routine, I spread out my beautiful blossoms. My funnel-like flowers attract the moths and long-nosed bats at darkness. These creatures come to gather the sweet nectar from my waxy, greenish-white flowers which bloom at night. We have an interdependent relationship because when I feed them, they pollinate my flowers.

The air feels sticky and smells humid. The creosote bushes emit a very distinct scent which only occurs when there is moisture. I have experienced this feeling and smell many times. This indicates one thing: water. Tomorrow should be a promising wet day.

Winner

LIFE

God wanted a place of natural beauty.
A place where all fears are erased
and all are in the trance
of the priceless treasure before them.

He started with a stream,
calm as night.
That stream grew and matured.
It dug deeper and deeper, into the earth,
searching for something more.

Soon that calm stream turned into a small river.
This river needed more than what the stream did;
it then began its journey for the better.
Soon the small river could go no further, a new beginning came,
and started shaping its future.

God had placed a raging red river in place of the stream.
This river shaped and carved the canyon with its rapids and waves.
It had the thoughts and strength of all around it.
Everything was a little brighter.

The greatest canyon started with a single drop of water.
Life is like a canyon, the river running through it are the people you meet or see.
You can choose to be a drop of water that makes a difference in someone's life.
Or you can think about your canyon and wonder why
you are still at ground level.

Cassie McReynolds
Westwind School
Pendergast School District
Ms Sandra Wedeen
8th Grade

Winner

THE GREAT SPIRITS

Grandmother, will you tell me the story
About the great spirits?
I have told you
many times.
I know, grandma,
But I like the way you tell it
It makes me mature.
Alright!
Long ago, when we Indians came,
There were three great spirits...
One's name was Warrior,
The other was Black Horse,
And the last was White Eagle.
The warrior was known
for his braveness, great powers and kindness.
And White Eagle was known to fly
To the past and to the future.
One day the great spirits visited a hogan.
A young boy was very sick.
He had been riding his horse in the cold.
He was so ill his grandfather called upon a medicine man.
He would call the three great spirits to help the boy.
That night while they were asleep
the spirits came in the young boy's dream.
The warriors sang to the young boy
For a very long while....
And Black Horse told him
He would always be protected....
Then White Eagle told him
He would be in good health in three days
But only if he believed in them.
The next day the boy told his grandfather and the medicine man.
His father doubted the story
But the medicine man believed the boy.
The medicine man had a long talk with the boy.
He told him to believe in the spirits with all his heart.
Later that day the medicine man returned to his home.
On the third day
The boy was back to normal
Just as the spirits had told him.
To this day, he thanks the spirits
And believes in them.

Tanya Barlow
Page Middle School
Page Unified School District
Kim Sobel
7th Grade

Thank you grandma,
For telling the story.
But you told most of it.
You know it by heart.
I know grandma!
Now that you know the story,
You can pass it down
To your children.

Finalist

It's Us

The desert is a beautiful peaceful place. The Sonoran desert is something that Arizona has that is found no other place in the world. It is the most precious thing to us - it is our environment. It is like a changing season all the time. The different moods of the desert can be seen from morning light to dusk. It seems to never look the same. The plants, the animals, the wind, the smells, these all work in harmony in the desert.

The animals seem to concentrate. They are straining their ear drums to listen for any change in the atmosphere that could mean food or danger.

The plants, cactus, trees and bushes all seem to sway to the melodious beat of the wind.

The brown mountains and red rocks aren't just mountains and rocks here, they are beautiful sculptures that turn purple and pink and orange with the sunsets and changing seasons. These symbolize the spacious land of the West. When I see the bulldozers, dune buggies, off-road cars, motorcycles and guns, I get angry that people think they own the earth when really we just belong to it. If we ruin what we have left of the desert, just imagine what it would be like. Mother Nature has loaned this place to us as her gift. Man is the only harm to this place, not the prey and its predator, or the snakes and the bugs - it is us.

Sara Worthington
Madison No. 2
Madison School District
Barbara Preston
7th Grade

Finalist

ARIZONA NIGHTFALL

The sun is now setting
over the mountains,
casting shades of purples, reds, and oranges,
o'er the clouds
which are suspended like feathers.
Arizona nightfall is near.
Quails will hurry
across the desert,
waiting
for darkness to appear.
Coyotes wait
in their dens
patiently,
for the thrill of the hunt.
The sky is now dark,
abright with stars.
The moon is full,
and a lonely cry is
heard, a coyote cry?
Ears perk-up,
everything is still.
This is a sign.
Arizona nightfall is here.
A gust of cool wind blows
across the desert.
A change from the day's heat.
Furry rodents will scurry
over the desert plain,
weaving through saguaro cacti.
An owl's hoot will be heard
now and then.
The crickets begin
a chorus of songs
to last
all night.
Millions.
The coyotes will stalk
their prey,
quietly
alert and aware.
For the saguaro cacti
give them protection
so nothing else can see
the terrifying kill.

Kristina Davis
Tortolita Jr. High School
Marana Unified School District
Ms. Marie Mancuso
7th Grade

A life is now lost.
A meal is now made.
A snake leaves its burrow,
slithering
from one cactus to another,
in search of food.
It spots a victim,
its sly eyes narrow.
There stands a pack rat,
too frightened to move,
for it knows
its life is about to end.
The lithe body coils,
ready to strike.
A delicious meal
the pack rat now becomes.
Shafts of moonlight
fall on the mountains
to accent its rigid outline.
A group of locusts,
join the chirping crickets
in a song
that proves
just how alive
the desert really is.
Hawks circle the scene below them,
making an occasional caw or two,
signaling other birds
to join in the hunt.
A hawk
gracefully
swoops down to capture
its prey,
a rattlesnake.
A mountain lion prowls
swiftly
throughout the majestic mesquites.
A silent animal
it is,
to take its victim by surprise.
It lies among
the many branches,
casting its eyes,
its yellow eyes,
all around.
A shriek
pierces the air,
as the wild cat
pounces
on its prey.
The night is still.
The high-pitched scream

rings over the mountains
and through the desert.
Silence.
Shivers
go up and down your spine.
A cool breeze comes,
gently.
Everything is forgotten.
Dawn is here.
The sun,
yellow and orange,
is appearing
over the mountains,
sending purple rays
over the desert.
The night is forgotten.
Everything brand new.
The world is awake,
all alert
for the new day
that is about to begin.
A single flower,
atop a saguaro,
blooms
yellows and pinks.
The first sign
of a fresh day.

Finalist

ARIZONA'S TREASURES ARE PLENTIFUL WHERE I LIVE

Gold enriched mountains, gleaming canyons reflecting the echoing images of young braves and wise chiefs.

Stone and brick ruins left to fill minds with images of bonfires and feather dressed souls stamping the soft white dirt. Yells and hoots fill the warm air, deep in the magic canyon, ricocheting off the hard stone walls. Fire reflects on the glossy smooth wall, making an image of dancing fire gods in the shadows of the cliffs and ridges.

Saguaro cactus stand tall, watching over its land, having seen rough cowboys toughened by the sand and long hard rides across this beautiful land. Six shooters strapped to their belts and legs with dry cracking leather resembling the unshaven hard faces and cracked lips of the Arizona cowboys.

Jack Smith
Madison No. 1
Madison School District
Mrs. B. Preston
7th Grade

Finalist

THE GRAND CANYON

The Grand Canyon,

Spectacular and in its grandeur

Changing colors amongst the light of the sky,

Sometimes orange, sometimes purple, sometimes white by the snow.

SPECTACULAR

The Colorado River,

Endless winding, stretching, weaving, and carving,

Throughout the

rugged, rigid, and eroded stone walls.

Wind, rain, snow,

Centuries upon centuries shaped and formed

One of Arizona's splendid treasures.

SPECTACULAR

The grandest of all Canyons,

One of the seven wonders of the world. Try it! Search it!

Ride it on a pack mule, float on the stillness of the

waters of the Colorado River, and adventure through the

whitewaters of the rapids,

Or glance from 9,165 feet high!

SPECTACULAR!

Erik Kallstrom
Villa de Paz School
Pendergast School District
Mr. David Moore
7th Grade

The Inhabitants,

Wild and Free! Leaping! Stalking! Hopping! Crawling!

Elk, Mountain Lions, Bighorn Sheep, Pronghorn Antelope,

and Mule Deer,

Shelter themselves in the granite and sandstone walls.

The Juniper, Piñon, Aspen, Fir, and Spruce trees,

provide a natural shelter for the Canyon's living creatures.

SPECTACULAR!

The Grandest,

Peaceful,

A brilliant model of God's Creation,

SPECTACULAR!

Finalist

The Softest Lullaby

The song of Arizona
sings to me
every time the wind blows.

She tells me of the
rushing Colorado,
dancing with the steep canyon,
under the stars' pale glow.

Or perhaps her beautiful red dress,
from Sedona's deep red shine.

Oh, and the gold upon her head,
within the deep copper mines.

Her white speckled green shawl of cotton,
upon her soft shoulders.

At night she hears the frightened creatures,
skimmering under great boulders.

Arizona's song will sing to you
when your mind is in purest thought,
to remind us of the many who died,
for the freedom we sought.

Cerina Da Graca
Royal Palm Middle School
Washington School District
Mrs. Pamela J. Cullen
7th Grade

Finalist

Climb Every Mountain

Climb a mountain, climb a beautiful dream.
Walk through a desert, walk through the sun's ever-glowing beam.
See a lizard, see a snake,
In Arizona from all of these you may partake.

In the North there are full and beautiful trees
In forests there are deer, fish, and bees
Snow in the winter, sun in the fall,
In Arizona you can see it all.

In the South sweat rolls down your face;
A thin wind caresses it with care and grace.
Meet an Indian, ride a horse,
Arizona is an enriching source.

Listen to the birds that fly
Hear their perpetual mating cry,
Coyotes howl by the moon,
Come and visit Arizona soon.

Unusual creatures haunt your house
Scorpions, black widows, a small brown mouse.
They add to the treasures you find on this land,
Lurking in Arizona's sand.

All the animals great and small,
All the plants tiny and tall,
They are more valuable than golden rings
Because only in Arizona, can you find these things.

Kelly Patricia Schnelzer
Mountain Sky Jr. High School
Washington School District No. 6
Ms. Andrea Golden
8th Grade

Finalist

Arizona

Many feet had trampled over the state,
Before it was admitted as state number forty-eight.
The Hohokam Indians lived there for a while,
And built canals to suit their lifestyle.
Marcos de Niza was the first white man,
Known to come upon this arid land.
The Seven Cities of Cibola he sought,
But Zuni Indian villages were all he got.
Many tried to claim our state,
But it was too little too late.
Juan de Ornate claimed this land for Spain,
But Mexico tried to regain their claim.
Beautiful missions decorate Arizona,
Some have an arc or contain a corona.
Father Kino built the most famous one,
He wanted to convert Indians and he got the job done.
Mexico revolted against Spain,
Many settlers left, for they had nothing to gain.
When Arizona came under Mexican power,
People came back to see what we had to offer.

Dawn Farmer
Mountain Sky Jr. High School
Washington School District No. 6
Mrs. Sandra E. Mathis
8th Grade

The Mexican War over two years was fought,

And Tucson is what the United States got.

With a treaty and the Gadsden Purchase of 1853,

Arizona was set free.

Indians earned a bad reputation,

Because they drove settlers away for a duration.

Then soldiers and forts were built to lessen Indian dangers and so,

The dangers lessened with the capture of Geronimo.

Many people thought it was safe to return,

And the population boom was a good turn.

Arizona to the U.S. was admitted and patriotism was tasted,

When it came to improvements, no time was wasted.

Roosevelt, Hoover, and Coolidge Dams were added for industrial needs,

And statewide developments were aimed to please.

Arizona's history is interesting and certainly is not bland,

When they ask "Who loves Arizona?"

I'll gladly raise my hand.

Finalist

Trail of the Sun

Piercing the darkness, and stopping the coyote's howl
The sun arose, ready to start a new day,
To have fun throughout Arizona.
The sun glided along the desert, and
The desert sizzled with excitement.
Huge Saguaros seemed a little greener at seeing the sun approach.
Animals came out and
Started their day, feeling the warm glow of the sun.
The sun had reached the Grand Canyon by this time.
It loved to play throughout the Canyon, and the Canyon smiled
In vivid shades of purple, red, and orange.
The dirty old trail leading down to the bottom of the Canyon
Even coughed up a dusty hello for the sun.
Arizona's beautiful Colorado River, shimmering in delight
Also greeted the sun while the sun paused to exchange greetings
With the river, too.
Coming down through Flagstaff to go to Phoenix, the sun danced
In a carefree manner among the tall pines and swayed
With the pine cones.
When it had reached Phoenix, the sun's rays splashed
Along the sides of the new shiny buildings.
It lit up the sidewalks and refreshed the streets.
People took out their sunglasses so they could smile back to it.
They recalled that it was the reason why Phoenix was named
The Valley of the Sun.
Next the Sun went past the highways.
The ancient Indian ruins were there.
Falling back into memories, the sun reminisced about the Indians
That had lived in the ruins that lay before it.
They were good people, but all that remained to tell their story was
A few dirt stained pots and the crumbled clay of wall.
Feeling somewhat drowsy, the sun waved a violet-red
Good-bye to its friends.
It lay down and pulled the navy blanket of stars
Over its head.
Once more the coyotes came out, and
Once more they howled to soothe the sun to sleep.
Maybe it would duck down to see Rainbow Bridge tomorrow.....

Maybe? Of course it would. This was Arizona.
A land with a never ending story to tell,
And a sun to show her the way.

Erin Leigh Pons
Mountainside Middle School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Sydele E. Golston
8th Grade

Finalist

THE LADY

She was born on the fourteenth of February in 1912.
Her wild side was quickly tamed,
And she became peaceful and serene.
She grew and prospered over the many years.
All who knew her admired her charm and beauty.
The "Five C's" were just a few of her many assets.
She enjoyed mild winters and many sunny days.
Many stories and myths were associated with her life.
The natives adored and worshipped her,
For she provided for all their needs.
Coronado, Father Kino, Doña Rosa, and George Hunt all knew her well.
Her old friends kept visiting.
Her new friends quickly grew to love her.
Outsiders envied her,
For they knew how special she was.
Her people worked hard to improve her more with each passing day.
They are hers, she is theirs, and they call her
Arizona.

McKenzie Dunning
Mountainside Middle School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Ms. Ruth A. Stromer
8th Grade

Finalist

"Soul Dance"

a drum's plea dances
to a heartbeat
leaving no marks in the sand

a cloud of thunder carves through
canyons
and draws the length
of mesa walls

lightning courses the veins of night
her blackened belly
gives birth
to a nation's spirit

rain climbs from heaven's loft
to earth's depth
and

hidden in the desert wilds
a drum dances on

Kimber Nelson
Madison Meadows School
Madison School District
Mrs. Linda Besnette
8th Grade

Finalist

What is Treasure?

What is treasure?
Treasure can be anything from a bottle cap to a gold coin.
The most imaginative people can find the treasure in
everything.
Just by closing their eyes.
To find treasure you need not look far,
Just in your own backyard.
When you find your treasure,
Keep it close to your heart,
For there it shall stay.
This treasure may not mean anything to someone else.
But it may mean the world to you.
Never let go.

The treasure of Arizona is not a gem.
But one of those treasures that you have to close your eyes
to find.
In fact the treasure of Arizona is not even a material
possession.
This treasure is special.
It will always be with you,
No matter how far away it may be,
For it is one of those treasures to be kept by your heart.
This treasure will never be lost, unless it is forgotten.
Never forget.

This treasure is a friendly gesture,
A smile,
A wave.
A greeting,
Anything nice someone does for you.
"Why is this treasure so special?" You ask.
Because the people of Arizona take pride in their state and
their fellow Arizonans.
And when they smile, or wave, or say hello,
They are giving you a treasure to be remembered always.
So smile at the next fellow Arizonan you see,
And continue the tradition that all Arizonans have carried on
for years,
by giving someone treasure.

Rachel Bingmann
Mountainside Middle School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Ms. Ruth Stromer
8th Grade

Finalist

The Canyon

Streaks of light blur the horizon.
The chasm sleeps, filled with clouds,
A sculpture without a sculptor,
A palette of colors.
Upward the misty clouds hover, uncovering the vast ocean of beauty.
Soon the white blanket evaporates, the bright sun touches the art.
The day passes on and the rainbow of color is displayed.
Shadows linger on the mottled wall.
A silver streak of paint worms its way deep below.
The day advances onward
As many kinds of people stop to stare.
Slowly the dying rays of light illuminate the beautiful blue, red,
orange, and yellow of the sunset.
Pastel dusk settles on the regal workmanship.
For the Grand Canyon it was merely a single day in a vast life,
Yet in that day many people will have witnessed a memorable sight.

Brad Hinton
Granite Mountain Middle School
Prescott Unified School District No. 1
Mrs. M. Sherrill
8th Grade

Finalist

THE RAPTOR

Flying over the great desert,
wings outstretched to catch the hot breeze,
my dark feathers curve to embrace the air,
and carry me up into the topaz sky.

Below,
the brown of the desert
reaches to touch the horizon
where it merges with the purple of distant mountains.

The desert looks empty,
and except for a few proud saguaro
seems devoid of life.

But my sharp blue eyes can see
the vast variety of life
that thrives here.

I see a cactus wren,
perching on a squat barrel cactus.

I see a coyote,
peeking out of her den and
waiting anxiously for nightfall
so she can hunt.

I see a jackrabbit,
its camouflage making it almost impossible to spot.
A nervous twitch of its ear reveals its hiding place.

As is my nature, I would stop and pursue this prey,
but I already have what I left the nest for.
Clutched tightly between my taloned claws
is a rattlesnake's limp body.

I soar over the beautiful desert
until I reach our tree,
a strong, sheltering Palo Verde.
My magnificent mate guards our nestlings.

As the sun began to set,
and the mournful cry of the coyote echoed across the desert
I fly off once again
in search of food to feed my family.

Emily Vaughan
Kyrene Middle School
Kyrene Unified District No. 28
Ms. Donna B. Gallaher
8th Grade

Finalist

ARIZONA'S BEAUTY

Phoenix desert heat,
The White Mountains' cold.
Cities, brand new
Tucson still old.

Skiing on the slopes
Or if you choose the lake.
Up tp Flagstaff
And snow for Christmas break.

Our majestic Grand Canyon,
The depth of Lake Powell.
The desert's night wildlife
A tiny mouse, a lonely owl.

From deserts to mountains
Our sun shining gold.
Arizona's beauty is easy to see
For everyone, young and old.

Sarah McGehee
Villa de Paz School
Pendergast School District
Ms. Janie Norman
8th Grade

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Winner

A Way of Life

Today a baby is born. It is not yet shown to the light. "Wait my child," the mother says. "Soon you will be introduced to the world. Tomorrow at the rising of the sun your name will be given to you. Your hair washed with 'movee' and you will be blessed with the 'corn of life.' Then you will be given your Hopi names by your aunts and grandmothers. Then you will grow my son.

Play with the children your age.
Play with the turtles in the canals. Do not play in the wash for then I will have to punish you. For many children have lost their lives playing in the wash.
Climb the rocks that show their colors proud from pink to deep maroon.
Don't climb the rocks that point right out of Mother Earth.
Hunt the rabbit and birds to learn in skill. Learn the times when the rabbits could kill even when dead.
Then you will learn the Hopi way of life.
You shall learn to pray to 'Masau.' Take part in the dances and speak in our language.
Learn to appreciate the gift of life that Mother Earth gives to us. Feed on Mother Earth.
Take from her the corn, the melons that grow in our fields.
Hunt your brother, the deer. After the kill, thank him for giving his life so that we may live.
As you grow you will dance in the butterfly dance with your sister that has chosen you.
As you grow into manhood, you will take part in the ceremonial dances.
Marry and have many children to bless me with.
You are more precious than the Grand Canyon and all the money in the world.

You are a treasure that cannot be replaced. Even though they have their ways of raising their children, we all love them the same." The mother kisses her son on the cheek with all love from her heart, pouring out in that single kiss. "You, my son, will learn to be a Hopi and appreciate all that is given to you."

Kelly Gayle Curry
Tuba City High School
Tuba City Unified School District No. 15
Susan Lafaele
9th Grade

Winner

Long Time Coming

For years my family listened as the Bureau of Indian Affairs spoke of building a high school. It wasn't until after Winoa left that Mama said it was time we stopped pretending and face the reality that there would never be a Hopi high school. For the next four years my sister had to attend a boarding school in New Mexico because there was not a high school on the reservation. I was almost nine years old when I watched Winoa put the last of her belongings into the back of Dad's old Chevy pickup. I still remember the look on Mama's face as the truck struggled up the unpaved road and out of sight. It wasn't until three days after Winoa left that Mama broke down and cried. Sitting on the floor, she cradled the headdress Winoa wore so proudly when she had performed the Hopi Butterfly Dance two years earlier. After Mama had stopped crying she leaned heavily against the wall of the hogan and explained why so many youths do not return to the reservation. There was a bitter edge to her voice when she told me that Indian boarding schools are government tools for breaking down our culture. She said most of our people leave these schools with their faith in our culture and traditions broken, but they also have little respect for the alien culture forced upon them. That was all Mama had to say, and as she stood up to finish her chores I wondered if she had told Winoa what she just told me.

Winoa had completed her third year of boarding school when she wrote to say she would not be returning to the reservation. My parents listened attentively as I read aloud what was written on her two pink sheets of stationery. Winoa was engaged to Lester Crawford, the white owner of a barber shop in New Mexico. She said they would be married shortly after her graduation from boarding school. She also said that upon Lester's request she had converted to Christianity. Mama's suddenly fragile frame shook as she whispered, "Winoa," between violent sobs. Papa looked my mother squarely in the eye and said, "I have no daughter by that name." He turned and left the hogan.

Susan Carroll
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Mr. J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

Mama fell sick shortly after my birthday. I was thirteen years old when the Bureau of Indian Affairs finally appropriated funding for Hopi High School. In the spring of 1984, construction of the school began in earnest. Mama seemed to gain strength with every stone that was laid in the foundation of the school. She refused to see a doctor, saying her poor health had come from fear of losing her last daughter to white men's boarding schools. Mama died of heart failure seven months before the school was completed. The night after Mama died I watched through a film of tears as members of our clan performed traditional ceremonies in Mama's honor.

On a warm, windy day in the late summer of 1986, I held my father's hand and felt genuinely happy for the first time since Mama passed away. We watched as the last stone, block and pane of glass were set in place. After a quarter century of struggle and frustration Hopi High School at First Mesa stood at last a reality.

Winner

Thoughts

fresh orange juice on a crisp cold morning
twilight sunset dipping below the mountains
canyon stretching downward to eternity
saguaro rising as an emperor of the desert

creek bubbling through a deep pine forest
city lying under a bright blue sky
rain falling with its own sweet fragrance
plateau ascending alone above the wide dark desert

crown rising as one as the shot swishes through
stadium sitting empty as the team plays on
music drifting skyward from raised violins
running shoes hitting the canal bank endlessly

battleship sunk in the deep still water
copper dome towering over the streets
one small part of the great land of freedom
Arizona

Paul Jenkins
Cortez High School
Glendale Union High School District
Mr. Tom Helms
10th Grade

Winner

A Short Play

SET-UP: In the hot, dry desert of Arizona, all the cacti of Cacti For Better Conditions (CFBC) have gathered to discuss their well-being.

President Prickly-Pear We're all here today for the good of our fellow cacti. It has come to our attention that the number of homeless cacti is increasing rapidly.

Vice Pres. Barry-Barrel Desert land is being built on by our neighbors, the humans.

Sammy Saguaro Yes, I know many cacti families who have lost their jobs and homes. We must do something fast.

Jumping Jack I say we must attack the human race with our needles, and kill them all!

President Prickly-Pear Now, now Jumping Jack, they are much more powerful and violence is not the answer.

Sammy Saguaro Can we purchase land and set up Cacti villages?

Vice Pres. Barry-Barrel We do not have very much money in the treasury. Actually we will never have enough money.

Jumping Jack Don't the Indians have reservations that the government gives them? Couldn't we have reservations too?

President Prickly-Pear Yes, I think it would be a good idea to submit a request for a cacti reservation. I'll take care of it and let you know the results at our next meeting.

CONCLUSION:

The request was approved and a Central Cacti Reservation was created in the heart of Arizona's deserts.

Ami Wright
Centennial High School
Peoria Unified School District
Ms. Gloria Nielsen
10th Grade

Finalist

THE FACES THAT MAKE OUR STATE

Our home is full of many people
whose lives are not concealed.
One look at their faces
and their true story is revealed.

An old woman's eyes,
in her tough and dark face,
tells us of her origins
and her home in her native place.

She is of Navajo Indians.
Her ancestors fought to be free
so they could live and learn every day
with the morals they believe.

Her people live in unity.
Their culture is their core.
She passes on her old traditions
like her fathers did before.

She teaches her many children
to make clothes and rugs by hand.
To grow their crops and build their homes
but still respect their land.

Her face is one of pride,
of old and happy days.
It's seen in other faces
who live a different way.

Neda Tavassoli
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

Another woman's story
holds no great mystery.
It has influenced our way of life
and charmed us by its history.

Decked out in her colorful dress,
she prepares to do her dance.
Her origins belong to Mexico,
one can tell with just a glance.

As a man begins to sing,
and the mariachi band begins to play,
the woman shares a part of her culture
as her dress begins to sway.

Her people kept their past alive
through their struggle and their strife.
They brought it to their neighboring land
and shared with us their way of life.

Yet, when talking of the many people
who affected us with their ways,
one must never forget the tough men
who came from the western days.

A glance at another face's features
makes it clear to understand,
the face's owner is a cowboy.
The last of the truly brave man.

In the past he was an outlaw
or hero who saved lives.
He rode into the darkening night
leading his cattle drives.

His kind taught our country
how to play rough in the dirt.
They brought to us their cowboy hats,
boots, and western shirts.

He, like the other people,
is part of our state's rich past.
They planted their seeds where we live
so their legacy will always last.

They helped to make our home
what it is today,
and with gratitude we thank them all
for helping us find our way.

These people take pride
in their past and present glory.
With great dignity and happiness
they gladly share their story.

Finalist

An Arizona Monsoon

The summer sun scorches the Arizona desert throughout the day. An old Saguaro, shriveled and rotting, stands alone amidst the fiery sands. A clump of old mesquite trees, dried and wilted, offers a tiny patch of shade to anything brave enough to face the searing heat. Tumbleweeds are the only motion in the desert except for an occasional lizard scurrying home. Even the rocks, thousands upon thousands of years old, are burned from the sun's frying rays.

A rabbit hops to the shade of the drying mesquite trees. He stops, sits on his haunches, and perks his ears. All is still, but then, over the red rock cliffs, appears an army of grey clouds. They march slowly towards the dehydrated plants. A snake comes out of his hole, but only for a second, to peek at the approaching relief. They grey army moves closer, but the sun still shines strong. The dry desert plants wait in longing for the cool relief. Then they arrive. The sky becomes almost completely black, and the shade from the hot fury lets the plants sigh in relief. A single drop of rain falls from the billowing clouds. It hits the sand and then vaporizes. Millions of drops follow, soothing the burned and dry desert plants. Almost instantly the sweet smell of palo verde fills the air. A cool breeze blows lightly, twisting through each rain drop.

The plants take in all of the refreshing water they can. The cacti become swelled and the mesquite trees bloom. But then, the army leaves almost as suddenly as it came. A cool whisper of wind is all that remains of the desperately needed relief. The clouds climb back over the mountains now dotted in hues of green. The sun dares not to show. The once dying saguaro now stands tall and renewed. The old branches of a mesquite proudly display their leaves, and the flowers of a barrel cactus begin to bloom. Bends of a rainbow appear in the sky above the beautiful Arizona desert.

Becky Blevins
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

Finalist

In Glory

Daylight stabs the eastern sky
The yellow sun ascending high
Sunlight piercing; sunlight keen
Wakes the sleeping land serene
The plains majestic; canyons grand
High above the desert sand
Ancient, stony mountains stand
Sentinels in this peaceful land

At the peak a brave presides
On a painted pony rides
Tall and noble; staunch and regal
With cloak of buffalo and headdress of eagle
In the land of sun the brave was born
Silver and turquoise jewelry adorns
As he prays for wheat and hopes for corn
Savoring the land in brief sojourn
And so he blows his battle horn
In peaceful glory

Wheel of fire begins to fly
Scorching the desert desolate and dry
Ominous wind; foreshadowing cloud
Envelops the land in quiet shroud
The sounds of the wild cease to be
As frightened birds launch from the trees
Animals abroad begin to flee
From the enemy o'er the sea

Paul Taunton
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Mr. J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

Marching a Spaniard captain comes
With cannons black and metal guns
With a bearded face and helmet gold
His eyes are hungry; legs are bold
In the name of conquest; the language greed
The pleas of natives he does not heed
Instead he follows a selfish creed
To satisfy his material need
And so he spurs his battle steed
In conquest's glory

Raging fury heading high
Rumbling orb across the sky
Yet at earth no word is spoken
No sound is heard-stillness unbroken
There is not bird; there is no hound
No tracks of feet lie on the ground
On battle's eve there is no sound
In fact, no life at all is found

In a day of bloody hue
Wagon wheels come crashing through
Soldiers, horses, women, men
Unscathed lies no field nor glen
In the name of destiny; the language war
the natives feel this language roar
As those who were not here before
Take the land for evermore
In battle's glory

Crimson and scarlet dance on the verge
Of mountains in which the sun is slowly submerged
The ball of fire-extinguished; its colors are quenched
The natives are vanquished; their homeland is wrenched
Even many years after the villages burned
The sun is still setting; the world still turns
Hopefully since then all of us have learned
That we can accomplish for which we have yearned
To live together
In glory

Finalist

Arizona's Treasures

As Michael and his father walked through the lush green forest of Northern Arizona, they looked up almost a hundred feet to see that they were under a beautiful green canopy of tree branches that seemed to touch the tip of the sky. Seeing the magnificent beauty they knew that they had discovered a treasure.

They felt something slide across their feet; they looked down to see a small gray snake. They reached down to touch it, but the snake would its tail into a tight coil and showed its splendorous red underside. They knew that this was characteristic of a Regal ring neck snake. When harassed the snakes coil their tails and show their brilliant red underside to try and ward of predators.

Michael and his father sat down on a rock and watched the snake slither away silently, and then they walked on. The trail became thicker with broad leafed trees and brilliantly flowering bushes.

When they looked closely, they could tell that some of the tree bark had been scraped off by deer. The deer scrape their antlers against the trees to mark their territory. The two men continued through the brush and soon came upon a clearing where the grass had been matted down; it was then that they knew this was a bedding ground for deer.

They kept on their path and soon came to a great canyon with red, green and purple flowers growing from the walls of white rock. Michael and his father felt a sense of humility when they saw that they were surrounded by the canyon. They ventured down to the stream bed to get a better look at the great canyon.

The bright yellow sun was shining down on the both of them, making their skin feel warm and their mouths thirsty. Michael decided to take a drink out of the stream, so he knelt down to take a drink. As he knelt to scoop some water from the stream he braced himself of a rock. The rock felt wet to him so he lifted his hand to see what he was touching and a small white canyon tree frog hopped off and dove into the water.

Michael and his father sat down on a rock and marveled at the treasure of Arizona that they had discovered. The lush wilderness and beautiful animal life made them feel serene, and they both felt as though they were the first ones to discover this pure and beautiful land.

Matthew Mancino
Sunnyslope High School
Glendale Union High School District
Mrs. Terri Fields
10th Grade

Finalist

Path of a Warrior

Lines, colorful like desert flowers gleamed across his face as he smiled at the setting sun. A lone coyote howled somewhere over the hill and reminded the old man of his youthful hunting days when his people still lived off the land and the tribe was strong. He had seen many moons rise over these old mountains and now the spirits called him to make his last journey.

His pinto, once the fastest horse in the village, now sagged with age and lack of use. A small tear slid down his cheek as he put the tattered bridle on the horse and mounted for the last time. Carrying nothing but his shoulder pouch and a canteen of water, he steered his horse toward the gleam of the rising moon, never glancing back at his ancient hut or the dead village that lay behind it.

It was a trail he had taken many times before and he knew it well. He stopped to rest at the towering Saguaro and took a swallow from his canteen. This Saguaro had served as his landmark for many years and he felt uplifted by its familiar presence.

Once again he rode on, stopping occasionally to take a last look. He dismounted one last time at the entrance to the canyon. Never before had he entered the sacred grounds, but the bones of all his ancestors and his wife lie here. As he bravely led his horse down to the bottom of the canyon, he began to chant.

Strong Indian pride and an old man's honor united under the pale moon and only the rustle of tumbleweed could be heard as the chanting stopped and the last of the tribe moved on to The Sacred Land.

Summer Moore
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Mr. J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

Finalist

Sacred Land

The long ride to Pinetop, Arizona, seemed even longer from the anticipation that grew inside her. She gazed out her window and listened attentively to her grandfather's stories of his Indian ancestors that lived in the Pinetop area. She felt she could not wait a second longer to explore this never-ending mountain of trees. When the car stopped, she jumped out to get her first breath of cold, crisp mountain air. As she rant to the peak of a hill, the air that filled her lungs burned inside her from the high altitude. Despite this, nothing stopped her.

She raced down the other side of the hill so quickly that she lost control. Finally, she fell with a thud, and accidentally knocked her head on an enormous log. After brushing the stars away from her eyes, she turned around and saw an old, half-hidden shack. It was unlike anything she had ever seen before. She heard her mother's voice in her head saying, "Don't go where it isn't safe," but her curiosity was too great. She rose to her feet and decided to investigate this place. She reached her hand out into the darkness of the entrance and instantly a spider web clung to her hand. This feeling scared her and she jerked her hand back immediately. Barely able to see in front of her, she cleared the rest of the debris and cobwebs from the entrance to shed some light. Scattered about the floor were torn, yellowed linens and broken pieces of pottery and jewelry. In the corner lay an unusually long reed that appeared to have parts chiseled out to perfection. As she picked it up, a cool breeze filled the room and sent chills up and down her spine. She tried to ignore this sensation, though, and closely examined this new-found object. The end of the stick looked like a pipe with different colored beads and

Lori Chervenak
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Mr. J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

feathers tied around it. She recognized it as an Indian peace pipe. She raised the pipe up to her face and a faint smell of smoke filled her small nostrils. Her first reaction was to run away as fast as she could, but her love for adventure compelled her to stay. She slowly walked around the room with her hand still clenched around the pipe. She noticed a passageway that led outside to an enclosed area. As she stepped into this area, the same chilling sensation which she had experienced earlier, returned. Instantly, she remembered all the stories her grandfather had told her about the Indian burial grounds and realized she was standing in the midst of one. Her grandfather always told her that these natural treasures of Arizona were sacred to the Indians and were never to be disturbed. She stood there mesmerized with all that had transpired and decided to keep this her own little secret. Leaving this sacred land silently, she knew these memories would pervade her mind for many years to come.

Finalist

The Path of the Eagle

The eagle flies far
Far above the wide expanse of the canyon
The cool winds blow across the land
And carrying the eagle onward
Onward through the land of the setting sun

Sunlight embraces the sky
And the sky moves on into eternity
With small, slow and gentle movements
The clouds glide in the path
The path of the eagle

Gentle colors fill the sky
Red, orange, pink and blue
And the sun fades behind the horizon
While the serene shadows of night
Dance on the irregularities of the land

The eagle flies on
On through the crisp night air
Onward towards his far away home
Where the sky meets the earth
And the land is pure

The moonlight casts a blanket
A blanket of white on the great canyon below
In the silence of the still night
He hears the howl of the coyote
And gentle whispers of the night breeze

Greg D. Pollick
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
J. Conrad Davis
10th Grade

He aligns himself
With the beams of the moon
And travels where the wind takes him
The land and sky his only companions
On the great journey home

As night passes its time to day
and the eagle flows through the rushing wind
He must stop to refresh himself
With the waters of the clear stream
And the shade of the grand trees

And yet he flies on
Over the fields of wild flowers
Dancing in the daytime breeze
Over snow-capped peaks
To the warmth of the lower desert

Dark clouds gather to the east
Rumbling, raging, ragged clashes
And the cold rain begins to fall
Refreshing the land with its moisture
And cleansing the eagle of its past

Then silence once again fills the air
And it is safe again to join the others
To spread wings and journey to the sky
As the rain-cleansed breeze
Blows its way west towards the afternoon sun

Gazing at the range of land below him
He crosses the path
The path of wild horses who gallop freely
Below his skyward position
And he turns once more

The azure stillness of the sky above
Is only rippled by the flight
The flight of the lone eagle
And only he knows
Where his path will lead

As the sun begins to fade
Fade into the horizon once more
The eagle sees the lone mountain
And the familiarities of his home
With twisted, turned and tangled branches

He know his journey is complete
And lets out a tremendous call
To alert all of the land
That he has finally come home
To the place he loves most

Winner

A Cowboy's Mission

The proud, unshaven cowboy rides his faithful horse through the unmerciful heat of the Southwestern desert. The sun blazes above, launching scorching yellow rays to the arid earth below. Removing his hat with a strong hand, the cowboy runs the back of a sun-brazen arm over his sweaty forehead. Now the lone man halts his horse and dismounts; his worn boots land with a dusty thud in the loose gravel.

Sitting in the windowed shade of a palo verde tree, the cowboy opens a leather-hide pack and takes out a small sack of beans and jerky. He eats the sustenance and sips precious water from a canteen, generously pouring some into a shallow tin for his horse. He listens. No noise penetrates the uncanny silence except for the gracious lapping of the horse nearby. An intense heat chokes any unseen breeze. The quail, the coyote and the lizard alike all escape slumbering in a midday siesta. Reclining on his back beside a patch of desert brush, the cowboy places his hat over his suntanned face, and like his fellow desert companions, he sleeps through the afternoon.

Later in the day, the lone cowboy awakens to the rustle of a passing tumbleweed. A breeze now conquers the oppressive heat, subtly carrying the rustic smell of desert flowers and mesquite leaves. The cowboy stretches, stands, and begins to untie his horse from the tree on which he has been harnessed. The sun is now present in its Western glory, casting oranger hues over the serene landscape.

The cowboy mounts the trusty horse, adjusting the stirrups which hang from the worn saddle. They gallop for a while on a faint trail overgrown with desert shrubs. A daring jackrabbit darts across their path and disappears into an abandoned rattlesnake hole. The cowboy's glittering blue eyes scan the unravished desert.

Suddenly both man and beast halt in awe! A Spanish mission, framed by majestic mountains in the distance, stands holy and solid before them.

Rachel Doerr
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale Unified School District
Mrs. Georgann Ripley
12th Grade

Slowly, man and horse approach. a once frequently-trodden path leads to the entrance of the structure. As the cowboy draws nearer, he notices a scattered army of heralding cacti proudly surrounding the mission; brigades of ocotillos stretch their thorny appendages toward the colorful heavens.

The cowboy pauses before the mission. The main building is a pure, white-washed stucco structure. Two towers ascend from the mission, one on each side of the rustic-red entrance. A wrought-iron gate is open, inviting the weary travelers into the desert sanctuary.

The lone cowboy dismounts and ties his horse to the gate. He proceeds alone, slowly and somewhat apprehensively entering the wooden doors of the asylum. A cool draft blows and whispers through the mission. The man glances down the wide passages leading to various rooms of worship. Several windows illuminate the stone walls, and he sees the strength of the sacred, desert structure. The draft changes slightly, and his nostrils fill with the faint smell of incense and candles from long ago.

Finally, the fiery sun casts its last rays behind a far mountain, and shadows obscure the secrets of the desert mission. An unseen spirit rustles the pages of several tattered books which lie on a nearby table. The cowboy almost hears the voices of the masses who once sought refuge here.

The cowboy does not know how long he has been inside the mission. His boots echo through the passageways as he retreats; he stops at the door and reverently removes his hat. His eyes have traces of tears when he finally takes the reins of his patient horse.

Now they head away down the path, and the cowboy glances back. A few fluttering cactus wrens land atop the highest tower. Listening for a moment, the cowboy hears the almost indiscernible rings and proclamations of the tower bells riding the evening wind. And then he is gone, a humbler man for having encountered this Arizona treasure.

Winner

Arizona: Culture and Beauty

My name is Running Water.
I am of the tribe Navajo,
from the North.

Our people settled in the
Great Red Rocks, the high
Rainbow cliffs, and the
hot open deserts.

We built our homes on the
Great Window of the valley,
a simple hole in a rock to
you, but our people had faiths.

My name is Estavan Hernandez.
I am a Spanish Conquistador,
from Sonora in the South.

We traveled North from South
and Central America, in search
of gold and converting the
natives to the faith.

Our people built great missions
and fortresses that stood as
beacons for the King and were
a great offering unto God.

My name is Mother Nature and
I too have added to Arizona's
Treasures. You White men and
Red men took from my green
Fruits to survive in this place.

Yes, we grew corn and gathered
grains to make our bread.

Our cattle did graze upon
your grasses.

I have also given you homes
and shelters to escape from
my winters and harsh summers.

With materials you gave us,
we created homes in caves, in
cliffs, and even mud villages.

We took from your liveliness
to create our great churches
and cities in your valleys.

Casey Wohlwend
Bradshaw Mountain High School
Humboldt Unified District No. 22
Vaughn Delp
11th Grade

You should never be thirsty
because my rushing rivers and
sparkling lakes are plentiful.

The Great Flowing Water
between the Walls, and the
placid seas in the Red Rocks
gave us fish also.

Your waterways also provided
us ways to travel among your
beauty and create flourishing
cities.

My beauty yes, but absolutely
your cultures. My treasures
are far and wide...

From the Red Pillars of
Window Rock in the North

to the beautiful Sonoran
Desert in the South

...They grow tall and
stretch for miles at a time,

Treasures like the Great
Canyon and the majestic
Ponderosas

And the elegant saguaro
and the towering San Francisco
Peaks.

Our names are history, but what we have
done for Arizona shall never be erased.

My name is Casey Wohlwend. I am a born and bred Arizonan and do you want to know what the most wonderful treasures about Arizona are? Not only has civilization not tightened its dirty and polluted hands around us, but Arizona, culture and beauty, is still here to be enjoyed by everyone.

Winner

HE IS ARIZONA

He is Arizona.

The crevices on the bottom of his shoes securely hold Arizona dirt compressed over several years of walking his rich land,

The faded denim blue jeans tell the tale of the all-American cowboy,

The plain white shirt demonstrating his love for simplicity.

His attire is not fancy, it doesn't need to be; he knows who he is.

He is Arizona.

His hands calloused yet gentle;

Calloused because hard work is his brother,

Gentle because they are slow to punish yet quick to love,

His arms of steel security;

Never failing to comfort or carry those who need,

His eyes go deep behind the color,

Always catching and appreciating life's little details.

His appearance is one of fatigue from the days work but he would have it no other way.

His is Arizona.

His mind:

Memories of life on his father's ranch,

Memories in California where the distant voice of Arizona called him home,

Memories of his children and grandchildren.

Cindy Mink
Sunnyslope High School
Glendale Union High School District
Karen Timberlake
11th Grade

His heart:

It keeps him here for the love of the land,

It keeps him here for the love of his childhood,

It keeps him here for the love of his family.

His happiness is caused by those he loves.

He is Arizona.

He is my Grandpa: Bill Godard.

Winner

A MODERN PIONEER

I stared with wonder at the fabulous figure before me, eager to shake her hand and wondering whether I was really about to meet one of the most famous and inspirational people in the United States. Though only ten years old at the time, I knew that I would never forget meeting the first woman Supreme Court Justice in United States history, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Watching Justice O'Connor sitting at the table of judges inside the U.S. Supreme Court building that day six years ago, I noticed her trademark sterness and the calm composure that emanated from her. Somehow it seemed that here was a person for whom justice came first. However, the full significance of Sandra Day O'Connor would not affect me until many years later; even now, I am not sure that I can truly appreciate all that she has achieved.

Upon discussing the background of Justice O'Connor with my father, I was stunned to discover that she is a native Arizonan like myself. "Surely such an important and dignified person in our government must have come from some sophisticated place that all famous people come from!" I thought. Yet it was the growing state of Arizona that molded Sandra Day O'Connor as a child and called her back as a young law-school graduate looking for a strong community in which to bring up a family. For the next twenty-five years, she laid the foundations of strong law **and** public careers, once even being asked to run for governor of Arizona.

Justice O'Connor's message to women is perhaps the most inspiring. She graduated from law school at a time when law firms simply did not want to hire females. However, she never gave up. Her first job was a small one in the local public defender's office in California. Over time, her intelligence and knowledge of the law guided her to become a lawyer, a Maricopa County Superior Court judge, a legislator, and finally, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice.

As we left the Courthouse in Washington, D.C. that day, my mind raced with all that I had seen. I had always thought that being a female was a challenge to overcome in life, and that **because** I was from Phoenix and not Los Angeles or New York, there existed a huge obstacle in my road to success. However, Sandra Day O'Connor has helped me to realize that being a female is an asset that will **lead** me through life, and growing up in Arizona is an experience that will **pave** my road to success!

Aimee Foreman
Sunnyslope High School
Glendale Union High School District
Karen Timberlake
11th Grade

Finalist

Spirit of the Land

She dances with the tireless wind
Elfin in her simple grace
She plays by an unholy sun
And feels it brown her lovely face
She haunts the crevice in the rock
Climbs upon the stickered trees
She pauses once to catch the lizard
Once again to set him free
She soars from peaks of mountains green
To depths of canyons red
She sleeps beneath the desert moon-
The healing land is all her bed
She paints her name across the sky
As day declares his end
She scorns the praise of human tongues
And laughs at toils of men
She is the spirit of the land
She blooms in every cactus flower
She never changes, never dies
And never fails in her strange power.

Lana Bakker
Bradshaw Mountain High School
Humboldt Unified School District No. 22
Vaughn Delp
11th Grade

Finalist

ARIZONA - A TREASURE ITSELF

The morning was young and crisp. A slight remnant of the chilled nighttime air still lingered in the waking daylight hours of the gorgeous state of Arizona. With me, I carried my trusty canteen, my twenty pound pack, and an excitement that I will never forget. My hair was pulled back, and my shoes were laced tight. As I cautiously peered over the edge of the massive gorge, I knew that I was ready for a hike down the most gorgeous canyon in existence.

Our fearless and stouthearted group consisted of my more than eager father, myself, and my three younger brothers who had not yet fully revitalized from the previous night's sleep. Equipped with plenty of water, munchies from mom, and a couple of fishing poles, we set out on our exhilarating journey down one of the greatest natural wonders of the world - The Grand Canyon!

The view was breathtaking. A rising sun illuminated the reddish-brown spires in a way that their colors changed shades as the day brightened. By glancing down the steep, jagged mile-long drop, a faint glimmer of the flowing Colorado River could be seen. Across from where I stood, I observed a young mountain goat calling from a steep ledge to its mother, as if asking for the direction which it should pursue.

As we travelled farther into the canyon, the air cooled and I could smell the dampness of the earth beneath my feet. A hairy, baseball-sized tarantula scurried quickly across the trail as I passed by. I placed my hand against the brisk canyon wall and felt the chill of the smooth, purplish surface. Although my muscles grew tired with each passing step, my pace accelerated as my enthusiasm grew. Here I was witnessing nature in its truest and most beautiful form. Reaching the bottom of this seemingly endless abyss had now become an ambition. No matter how tiresome the feat, I could not let myself give up.

Anita Ray
Westwood High School
Mesa School District
Kae Knight
11th Grade

Needless to say, I began to wonder if there existed an end to the immense canyon, and I doubted if I could finish the hike. It was agreed upon that what we all needed was a rest stop, so we dropped our packs and sat down to relax. Unfortunately for my younger bother, he chose to sit in a place where there already rested a tiny, prickly cactus. Never in all my life had I seen anyone jump so high. While my brother stood there shocked at what had just happened, we could not help but burst into laughter. Soon after my dad had skillfully demonstrated his Boy Scout tweezer skills, even my brother could not help chuckling at the humor in the sudden burst of energy and speed with which he had jumped away from the side of the mountain.

Three hours since I had first set foot on the trail, I finally reached the bottom. As I looked up into the cloudy sky from within the enormous canyon, I felt small. The air was fresh and the jagged multicolored walls remained unaltered by man - no dirty pollution - no busy cities - no noisy traffic. Just me and a couple of gray bushy-tailed squirrels pausing to enjoy the calm silence of nature.

And so the entire day was spent fishing the chilly Colorado River and enjoying the scenery. The murky water gushed past rapidly, and I caught at least a foot-long rainbow trout each time I threw the line out. (Those that we would not eat were set free.) My younger bothers had never been so thrilled (and proud) in their entire lives.

That night as I watched the pale, red sun disappear behind the steep walls of the canyon, I contemplated the various miracles I had witnessed on just this one trip. My entire day had been so full of adventure, amazement, and fun! Surely, there were many more treasures awaiting me in Arizona if I just took the time to look. Though puzzled that so often this 48th state goes unnoticed, I fell asleep content in knowing that my state is spectacular.

Finalist

Desert Tortoise

Slow moving and wise,
with Prehistoric ties
Eyes of deep brown,
and a perpetual frown
Found in the Mohave and the Sonoran,
and yet you seem so foreign
Deep within your shell,
oh, the stories you could tell
Of ancient stars in ancient skies,
and how they came to their demise
Grey, brown, and green,
you came on to the scene
In order that you,
may live and be true
In a natural state,
as directed by Fate.

Shannon O'Shaughnessy
Sunnyslope High School
Glendale Union High School District
Mrs. Karen Timberlake
11th Grade